

# BASIS POINTS

LITTLE THINGS THAT HELP YOUR BUSINESS GROW

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Welcome to Basis Points! Each month, Basis Points provides you tips and techniques that we've gleaned from a variety of sources to help better your business life. In this month's issue themed, "Optimizing Your Website" we share some ideas on how you can get greater impact with your web presence.

## Website Neglect

According to a 2007 survey of small business owners, 23% of their company's websites had not been updated since their launch. And the average age of the surveyed websites was four years.

For a medium whose implicit promise is the instantaneous delivery of timely information, this finding is as shocking as it is shameful. The survey also disclosed that over a third of businesses had no budget for regular website updates.

**Lesson:** Don't be guilty of "benign neglect". Keep your website content fresh and interesting. The more current your information, the more valued you'll be.

*Source: Netflare Business Web Factory, Cambridge, UK (2007)*

"You're not engineering a website, you're designing a user experience."

- Mohanbir Sawhney,  
Northwestern University

## Four Ways to Improve Your Website

**1. Give something of value away.** Intellectual content (i.e. white papers, special reports, proprietary research) can both enrich your audience and bolster your reputation as a thought-leader.



**2. Put your logo on every page of your site.** This helps reinforce your company's brand and unifies your website's overall look-and-design.

**3. Avoid using heavy pictures.** Photos or illustrations that incorporate large files slow the page upload process. Use graphics smartly. And be sure they're 'web-optimized' (i.e. .gif, .jpg or .png formats).

**4. Keep it simple and short.** Don't make your pages too long. People don't like reading from a screen. If you have a longer article, create a short summary paragraph and hyperlink to the rest of the text.

*Source: Emeeting Software Newsletter, October 2007*

## Checking Out the Competition

An important tool in evaluating your own website is to judge it against your closest competition. If you haven't visited your competitor's sites lately, what better time than now? See how your website compares in terms of:

- *Look and feel* - Does the website look professional? Does it project trust and confidence?
- *Navigation* - Is the site organized smartly? Is moving from page-to-page intuitive?
- *Contact information* - How readily can visitors contact the firm? Does it include a physical address and phone number as well as an email address?
- *Speed* - How quickly does the site load?



*Source: Webcity Source Guide, 2007*